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Comments: This comment is more or less a copy and pasts from a trail advocacy group, but it accurately captures my feelings. It's important that we recognize class-1 eMTBs as distinctly different from class 2 and 3 eMTBs. Class 1 eMTBs more or less occupy the same niche as human-powered mountain bikes- if we can determine that class-1 eMTBs do not have an unacceptable, detrimental, impact to other non-motorized trail users, the environment, and the trail, then we can find a management solution that allows class-1 eMTBs on non-motorized trails. Designating non-motorized trails as motorized as a solution to broadening accss to eMTBs would jeopardize that access if indeed the reclassification was detrimental to trail funding.

Thank you for the opportunity for the public to engage on FSM 7700 and 7710, which would revise Forest Service directives to update and clarify guidance on management of electric bicycle (e-bike) use on National Forest System lands. Hundreds of organized mountain bike clubs around the country manage thousands of volunteers who work closely with land managers on trail development, trail maintenance, and trail education for all users. Much of this work relies on funding sources specific to non-motorized trail projects. The proposed directives could jeopardize this funding and increase user conflict if non-motorized trails were to become reclassified as motorized to allow for eMTBs. Instead, the final directive must reconsider how to allow class 1 eMTBs on select non-motorized trails while retaining a trail's non-motorized status, similar to the recent Department of Interior final rule. The final directive can be further improved by following the International Mountain Bicycling Association's (IMBA) management recommendations: managing the three classes of e-bikes separately from one another, and prohibiting class 2 and class 3 eMTBs on natural surface, non-motorized trails. Mountain bikers appreciate the leap in technology presented by eMTBs is a unique management challenge. These proposed directives rightfully plan separate management for bicycles and electric bicycles. It is critical that land managers and local mountain bikers work together to determine where eMTBs are and are not appropriate on current and future mountain bike trails. Thank you for the willingness to engage with the mountain bike community.